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SUBJECT: AUGUST 20 MFA PRESS BRIEFING: PROTESTS, GEORGIA CEASE FIRE,
SUSPECTED TERRORISTS, DALAI LAMA

[1](#)1. Key points at the August 20 afternoon MFA press briefing were:

-- All protestors require approval of the Public Security Bureau, however, pro-Tibet independence activities will not be welcomed by the Chinese people.

-- China welcomes the cease fire between Russia and Georgia and hopes it will lead to lasting peace.

-- The spokesman had no information regarding reports that 35 Pakistanis had been detained as terror suspects by China.

-- China hopes that France will consider its "clear and consistent" positions on the Dalai Lama to avoid problems.

-- China firmly opposes terror and expresses its condolences to the victims of the suicide bombings in Algeria.

Protests Require Approval

[1](#)2. At the August 20 MFA press conference, spokesman Qin Gang reiterated that Public Security Bureau (PSB) approval is required to hold a protest in China. Qin asked reporters if they were "disappointed" after reading the Xinhua report that none of the 77 applications to protest in Beijing during the Olympics were approved because it was "not exciting." Pro-Tibet independence protestors also must follow the law, Qin reminded the journalists, however anyone advocating "splitting China" would not be welcomed by the Chinese people. Qin had no information on reports that two elderly women had been sentenced to reeducation through labor following repeated applications to protest.

South Ossetia

[1](#)3. China welcomes the recent cease fire agreement and troop withdrawal in the conflict between Russia and Georgia, said Qin. China hopes that the agreement will lead to a peaceful solution and ensure peace, stability and "normal life" in the region.

Reported Detention of Suspected Pakistani Terrorists

[1](#)4. The spokesman had no information regarding reports that 35 Pakistanis had been detained as terror suspects by China.

Dalai Lama in France

[1](#)5. When asked to comment on the Dalai Lama's planned trip to France, Qin noted that China's position on the Dalai Lama is "clear cut and consistent." China hopes that France will consider China's position and work with China to avoid any problems on the issue.

Algerian Bombings

¶16. Qin expressed China's condolences and sympathy to the victims of the suicide attacks in Algeria. China "firmly opposes terror and supports the Algerian government's efforts to combat terror and safeguard stability."

Reaction to Death of Zambian President

¶17. Asked for China's reaction to the death of Zambian president Levy Mwanawasa, Qin Gang lauded Mwanawasa's contributions to improving relations with China and said that China will never forget his accomplishments. China wants to work with Zambia to develop further bilateral relations.

Poisoned Dumplings

¶18. Chinese authorities are still investigating the dumpling incident and details of the investigation should not be revealed before its conclusion, said Qin in response to a question regarding reports that China had asked Japan not to release information that "poisoned dumplings" have sickened Chinese citizens as well as Japanese. China attaches great importance to food safety not only for Japanese consumers but also Chinese consumers, said Qin. China wants to continue to work with Japan on the issue.

Hu Jintao Visit to Korea

¶19. Qin described Hu Jintao's upcoming visit to the Republic of Korea as "a major event for the two countries." Hu will meet with

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President Lee Myung-bok, Korea's Assembly Speaker and Prime Minister to exchange views on bilateral relations and regional issues. Hu would like to work with the ROK to identify the goals and direction for future bilateral relations.

Russian Security Council Secretary Visits Beijing

Russian Security Council Secretary Nikolai Patrushev discussed ways "to further promote strategic cooperation in a wide range of fields" during his meeting with Dai Bingguo in Beijing on August 18.